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NEWS RELEASE

Release Number: 25

Release Date: March 23, 2006

New Blue Ribbon Commission on Foster Care Launches Statewide Study Today

Supreme Court Justice Carlos Moreno Chairs Panel To Secure Safe, Permanent Homes for Foster Children

Ceremony Today Will Highlight Commission Goals

San Francisco—California's new Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care will meet for the first time today to begin a study of one of the most critical issues facing the justice system today—the need to quickly secure safe and permanent homes for California's 97,000 foster children, nearly 20 percent of the nation's entire foster child population.

Appointed by Chief Justice Ronald M. George, the representative commission, chaired by California Supreme Court Justice Carlos R. Moreno, is made up of judges, legislators, attorneys, community leaders, and others with broad expertise.

At a ceremony at 11 a.m. today, Justice Moreno will make keynote remarks on the importance of the commission's work. At 1:45 p.m., Administrative Director of the Courts William C. Vickrey will make remarks and will present a resolution to Justice Moreno that outlines the Chief Justice's far-reaching charge to the commission. The ceremony will be held in the Judicial Council Conference Center, Hiram W. Johnson State Office Building, Third Floor, 455 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco.

As the commission begins its study, it faces these facts, among others:

- Nationally, most foster children wait an average of three years to find a permanent home, and many are bounced to three or more homes in the process.
- Youth who grow up in foster care often leave it unprepared when they turn 18—half are unemployed, a third are homeless, and one in five ends up in jail.

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The commission will explore the causes and consequences of court-based delays and make recommendations on how to improve the ability of courts to move children quickly out of the legal limbo of foster care. Specifically, the commission is committed to:

- Improving the ability of the federal government, the state, local agencies, and the courts to secure more quickly safe, permanent homes for foster children and at the same time to reduce the need for foster care.
- Establishing a permanent collaborative framework among all those who have responsibility for the well-being of vulnerable children.
- Developing strategies for applying resources in more flexible ways to support children and families while persuading the federal government to invest more effectively and to lift restrictions on how money can be spent by the state.
- Targeting further improvements in the performance of the courts where often the most critical life decisions are made.

The membership roster is attached.

The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and promotes leadership and excellence in court administration.

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California Blue Ribbon Commission
On Children in Foster Care

As of March 23, 2006

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Supreme Court of California

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California Strategies
Casey Family Programs

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Fifth Supervisorial District

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Attorney
Law Offices of Cotchett, Pitre, Simon &
McCarthy

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Director
California Department of Social Services
Children and Family Services Division

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Program Services Division
Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs

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Member, California State Assembly
47th Assembly District

Hon. Kathryn Doi Todd

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Second Appellate District, Division Two

Hon. Richard C. Blake

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Co-Director, Center for Child and
Youth Policy
University of California at Berkeley

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California Department of Social Services

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Superior Court of California,
County of Santa Clara

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Former President pro Tempore of the
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John Burton Foundation for Children
Without Homes

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General Tax Law Bureau

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Staff Attorney
Youth Law Center

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California Department of Mental Health

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Superior Court of California,
County of Los Angeles

Ms. Diane Nunn
Division Director
Center for Families, Children & the Courts
Administrative Office of the Courts

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Court of Appeal
Fourth Appellate District, Division One

Mr. Ken Patterson
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Stanislaus County Community Services
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Hon. Susan D. Huguenor
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Superior Court of California,
County of San Diego

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California CASA Association

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The Stuart Foundation

Ms. Linda Penner
Chief Probation Officer
Fresno County Probation Department

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California Youth Connection

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Santa Clara County Social Services Agency

Ms. Pat Reynolds-Harris
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California Permanency for Youth Project

Ms. Donna C. Myrow
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L.A. Youth

Maria D. Robles, R.N.
Sacramento

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Superior Court of California,
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Ms. Jennifer Rodriguez
Legislative and Policy Coordinator
California Youth Connection

David Sanders, Ph.D.
Director
Los Angeles County Department of Children
and Family Services

Mr. Gary C. Seiser
Senior Deputy County Counsel
Office of County Counsel

Mr. Alan Slater
Chief Executive Officer
Superior Court of California,
County of Orange

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Public Defender
County of Marin

Hon. Todd Spitzer
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71st Assembly District

Hon. Darrell S. Steinberg
Former Member, California State Assembly
Hanson Bridgett et al.

Hon. Dean T. Stout
Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California,
County of Inyo

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